

Japanese military fiber. On receipt of this letter I definitely came to the conclusion that, if this was the way a friend of ours felt who had ample opportunities of knowing, the Japanese undoubtedly also felt that they were our superiors; and that it was time for a show down. I had great confidence in the fleet; I went over everything connected with it and found that the administrative officers on shore were calmly confident that they could keep everything in first class shape, while the officers afloat, from the battle-ship commanders to the lieutenants in charge of the torpedo boats, were straining like hounds in a leash, and the enlisted men were at least as eager, all desertions stopping and the ships becoming for the first time overmanned as soon as there was a rumor that we might have trouble with Japan, and that the fleet might move round to the Pacific. I felt that, in any event, if the fleet was not able to get to the Pacific in first class shape, we had better find it out; and if Japan intended to have war it was infinitely better that we should gain two or three months necessary to prepare our fleet to start to the Pacific, instead of having to take those two or three months after war began.

Accordingly, in answer to the question of Von Tirpitz, I told him that when the fleet had once started, it meant that we had gained three months anyhow, and that the fleet was doing what it would have to do in any event if the Japanese went to war; and so that if they did make war it would be proof positive that I had followed

exactly the
right course; and that if they did not go to war,
but became
peaceful, it would also be proof positive that I
had fol-
lowed exactly the right course. The latter was
what ac-
tually happened; and every particle of trouble
with the
Japanese Government and the Japanese press
stopped like
magic as soon as they found that our fleet
had actually
sailed, and was obviously in good trim. As I
told Von Tir-
pitz, I thought it a good thing that the
Japanese should
know that there were fleets of the white races
which were
totally different from the fleet of poor
Rojestvensky. He
said to me, as did the Emperor, that he
regarded this voyage